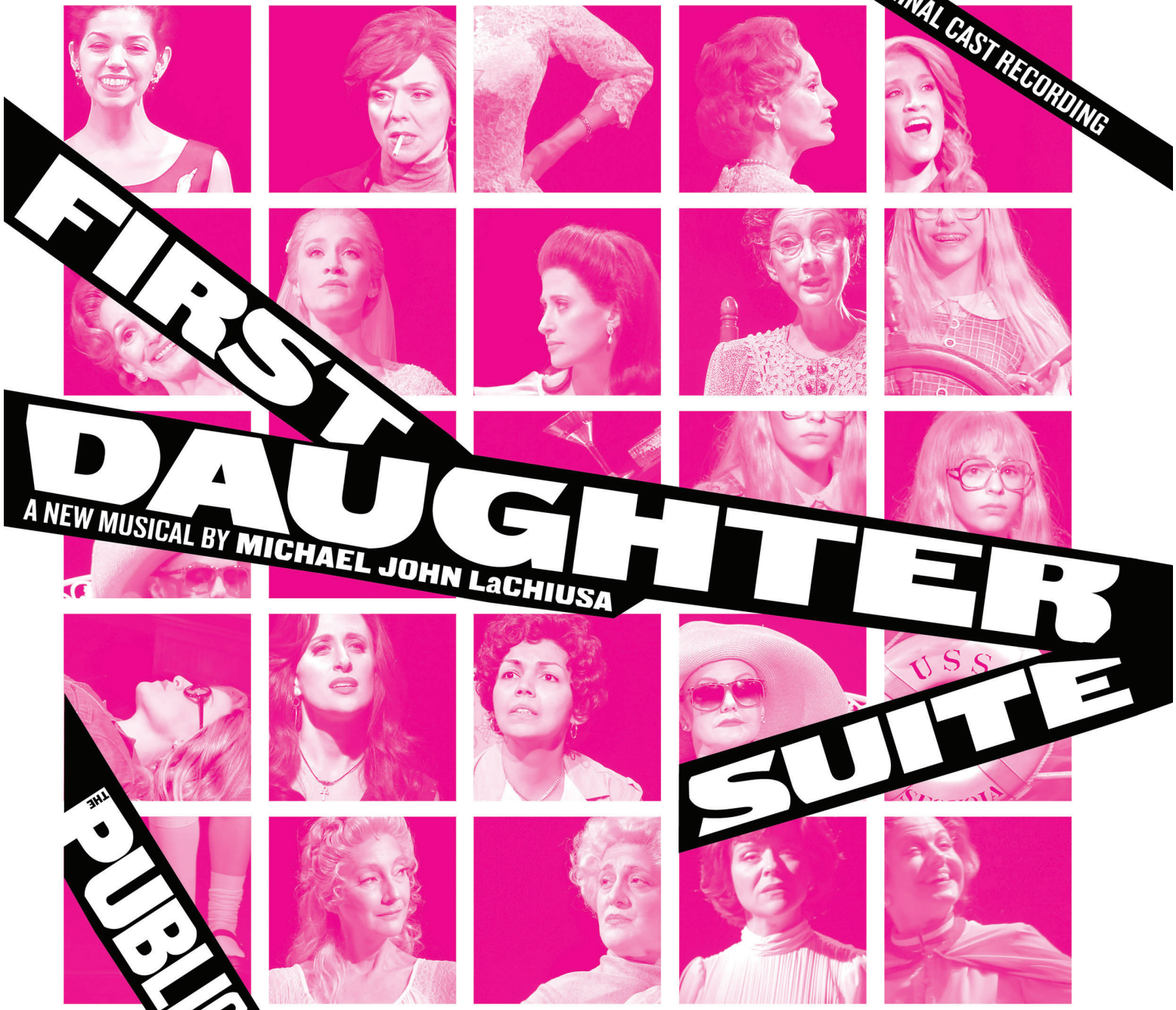
ORIGINAL CAST RECORDING
FIRST DAUGHTER SUITE
A NEW MUSICAL BY MICHAEL JOHN LaCHIUSA
THE PUBLIC

THE PUBLIC THEATER | **OSKAR EUSTIS** ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | **PATRICK WILLINGHAM** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FIRST DAUGHTER SUITE

A New Musical by **MICHAEL JOHN LaCHIUSA**
Directed by **KIRSTEN SANDERSON**
Choreography by **CHASE BROCK**

With **ALISON FRASER**, **RACHEL BAY JONES**, **CAISSIE LEVY**, **THERESA McCARTHY**, **BETSY MORGAN**, **ISABEL SANTIAGO**, **CARLY TAMER**, **MARY TESTA**, **BARBARA WALSH**

Scenic Design **SCOTT PASK**
Costume Design **TONI-LESLIE JAMES**
Lighting Design **TYLER MICOLEAU**
Sound Design **KEN TRAVIS**
Wig and Hair Design **ROBERT-CHARLES VALLANCE**
Orchestrations **MICHAEL STAROBIN** and **BRUCE COUGHLIN**
Music Coordinator **SEYMOUR RED PRESS**
Music Director **OR MATIAS**
Production Stage Manager **THERESA FLANAGAN**

Associate Artistic Director
MANDY HACKETT

Associate Producer
MARIA GOYANES

Casting
JORDAN THALER
HEIDI GRIFFITHS

Senior Director of Marketing
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General Manager
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Devised Theater Initiative/
Co-Director of the Under the Radar Festival
MEIYIN WANG

Co-Director of the
Under the Radar Festival
MARK RUSSELL

Director of Joe's Pub
SHANTA THAKE

Director of Communications
CANDI ADAMS

Director of Public Forum
JEREMY McCARTER

Production Executive
RUTH E. STERNBERG

Commissioned by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Artistic Director: Bill Rauch, Executive Director: Paul Nicholson.
FIRST DAUGHTER SUITE was developed, in part, at the 2014 Sundance Institute Theatre Lab at MASS MoCA.
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THE PHILIP AND JANICE LEVIN FOUNDATION provides lead support for The Public's access and engagement programming.
THE LUESTHER T. MERTZ CHARITABLE TRUST provides leadership support for The Public Theater's year-round activities.

Isabel Santiago

Betsy Morgan, Barbara Walsh and Caissie Levy

CAST

HAPPY PAT

Pat Nixon	**BARBARA WALSH**
Julie Nixon Eisenhower	**CAISSIE LEVY**
Tricia Nixon	**BETSY MORGAN**
Hannah Nixon	**THERESA McCARTHY**

AMY CARTER'S FABULOUS DREAM ADVENTURE

Amy Carter	**CARLY TAMER**
Susan Ford	**BETSY MORGAN**
Betty Ford	**ALISON FRASER**
Rosalynn Carter	**RACHEL BAY JONES**

PATTI BY THE POOL

Patti Davis	**CAISSIE LEVY**
Nancy Reagan	**ALISON FRASER**
Anita Castelo	**ISABEL SANTIAGO**

IN THE DEEP BOSOM OF THE OCEAN BURIED

Barbara (Bar) Bush	**MARY TESTA**
Robin Bush	**THERESA McCARTHY**
Laura Bush	**RACHEL BAY JONES**

MUSICIANS

Piano/Conductor	**OR MATIAS**
Keyboard 2	**WILEY DeWEESE**
Violin/Bass Drum	**KATHERINE LIVOLSI-LANDAU**
Cello	**DEBORAH ASSAIL-MIGLIORE**
Flute, Piccolo, Oboe, English Horn, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Alto Saxophone	**JEREMY CLAYTON**
French Horn	**SHELAGH ABATE**

Caissie Levy

ACT ONE

Company

1. Opening

HAPPY PAT

Caissie Levy, Theresa McCarthy, Betsy Morgan, Barbara Walsh

2. Out Go the Chairs/Happiness
3. Ruined
4. Martha/Two Perfect Girls/Daddy's Mind
5. Why Not?/Surrender
6. Never Surrender

AMY CARTER'S FABULOUS DREAM ADVENTURE

Alison Fraser, Rachel Bay Jones, Betsy Morgan, Carly Tamer

7. Mother Likes to Dance
8. Susan Ford
9. Fabulous Dream Adventure
10. Iran
11. Daughters Of
12. Everyone's Dead/
    Fabulous Dream Adventure (Reprise)

A complete libretto is available at
SH-K-BOOM.COM/FDSLYRICS

ACT TWO

PATTI BY THE POOL

Alison Fraser, Caissie Levy, Isabel Santiago

1. Patti by the Pool
2. Anita's Song

IN THE DEEP BOSOM OF THE OCEAN BURIED

Rachel Bay Jones, Theresa McCarthy, Mary Testa, Company

3. Robin/Come On Inside
4. Your Big Brother George
5. You, My Love
6. My Beautiful Mind
7. Underneath the Waves
8. Laura/No Tears
9. Let Go/Finale

Alison Fraser

Rachel Bay Jones, Alison Fraser, Betsy Morgan and Carly Tamer

For a quarter of a century, Michael John LaChiusa has been writing brilliant, beautiful and utterly original musicals for the theater.

From the gorgeous chamber "prequel" to **FIRST DAUGHTER SUITE**, FIRST LADY SUITE, to his epic American saga GIANT, Michael John has been both utterly unpredictable in his subject matter and tone and yet utterly consistent in the depth of his imagination and quality of his composition. He performs the deepest and most important function we demand of artists: he gives our fears, anxieties, hopes and dreams a distinctive, personal shape. He corrals our national obsessions; he gives form and pressure to the age. Listening to Michael John's work, we become more aware of who we are. He brings us, not just to life, but to consciousness of life. It's why we have art in the first place.

But even in Michael John's rich catalog, **FIRST DAUGHTER SUITE** is an exceptional delight. The range of tone is astonishing, from the domestic comedy of HAPPY PAT to the acid-tongued anger of PATTI BY THE POOL; from the delirious goofiness of AMY CARTER'S FABULOUS DREAM ADVENTURE to the heartbreaking portrait of the Bush family IN THE DEEP BOSOM OF THE OCEAN BURIED. What other writer for the musical theater has this range and fearlessness?

The women of **FIRST DAUGHTER SUITE** are very private people who are forced to live very public lives, and the intersection of the personal and the political is where the tension and beauties of the musical are revealed. In these portraits, Michael John has not only created detailed, convincing and original portraits of the women who have lived in the White House, he has also drawn indelible portraits of their absent husbands. Nixon, Carter, Ford, Reagan and Bush (two of them) each emerge with striking clarity from these pieces. Their absence from the stage only allows Michael John to evoke them more clearly, without cliché and easy imitations.

Michael John's fabulous score is here realized by New York theater royalty. The amazing women who make up this cast are brilliant interpreters of Michael John's work... there isn't a celebrity among them, but they are all stars. Kirsten Sanderson, Michael John's extraordinary friend and colleague, brought this cast together and gave it a perfect production here on Astor Place. What a joy that we can share their work through this album.

Finally, a word of thanks. Ted and Mary Jo Shen have been dedicated, powerful supporters of Michael John's work for many years. Neither the show nor especially this album would have been possible without them. Their generosity and their passion have contributed more to the American musical theater than words can express. Their friendship has saved lives. All of us at The Public are deeply grateful to them.

— OSKAR EUSTIS
Artistic Director,
The Public Theater

Carly Tamer and Rachel Bay Jones

Barbara Walsh and Theresa McCarthy

Carly Tamer and Alison Fraser

OPENING In the East Sitting Room of the White House, FIRST LADIES and FIRST DAUGHTERS gather for a photo shoot. As they sing about coping with the stress of living in the White House, PAT NIXON appears, anxious and worried. The First Ladies and First Daughters disappear into the shadows and **HAPPY PAT** begins.

HAPPY PAT It's June 12, 1971, the wedding day of First Daughter TRICIA NIXON, and despite the best efforts of the White House staff and military personnel, things are off to a rocky start. The weather is not cooperating and a decision has to be made about whether or not to have the wedding inside or outside, in the White House Rose Garden. Tricia's younger sister, JULIE NIXON EISENHOWER, pointedly lets their mother PAT NIXON know that leadership is called for. Having retreated to the sitting room, Pat's indecision is causing chaos for the staff, while the press and VIP guests are growing restless. As Pat struggles with her inability to take charge, the ghost of her mother-in-law, strict Quaker HANNAH NIXON appears, castigating Pat for raising vain and shallow daughters, while bemoaning the failure of her own son, Richard. Hannah's dark and critical presence moves Pat to sing of the one thing she wants on her daughter's wedding day: a moment of pure and simple happiness. The noisy entrance of her daughters, Tricia and Julie, interrupts her reverie. Tricia is in a panic, her perfect wedding day is falling apart; not only is the cake about to topple over, but Martha Mitchell, the Attorney General's wife, is upstaging her with an outrageous yellow organza outfit. Still unable to take charge, Pat sends Tricia and Julie to the President's office where Nixon is meeting with Bebe Rebozo, to see if they'll know what to do. Alone again with the ghost of Hannah, Pat muses on the sad and self-destructive life of Martha Mitchell, who lacked the skills needed to survive in Washington D.C. As she sings about Martha, Pat wonders if she might not be fit for Washington herself. Julie and Tricia return frustrated, their father and "Uncle" Bebe are distracted and have sent the girls back to Pat for a decision about the wedding. Pat tries to calm them down with a simple breathing exercise. It works for only so long before Tricia and Julie are bickering again. Tricia wants to run back to her father but Julie stops her, explaining that scandal is brewing in the West Wing: the *New York Times* is going to publish excerpts from the Pentagon Papers: classified government documents disclosing secrets about U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Tricia ignores Julie and runs off to see her father. Privately, Julie asks Pat if this entire wedding might not be a smokescreen to divert attention from this new scandal. Pat denies it, though it's clear she has her doubts. Hannah encourages Pat to explore her feelings about her husband, how he courted her, and how she came to love him. But Hannah is not convinced by Pat's romantic tales of her early marriage, and tells her to surrender and give up any hope that the man she married can ever be changed or saved. When Julie and Tricia reenter after having been rebuffed by their father, Pat almost caves in to Hannah'a cruel seduction, but finds the strength to overcome it. Pat tells her daughters to never surrender; to stand by the ones they love, and to stand by their choices. She leaves Tricia to choose for herself whether to have the wedding inside or out as she goes to get her husband. Empowered by her mother's strength, Tricia makes a decision: she'll have her wedding outside. As Julie goes off to instruct the White Staff to take out the chairs, Tricia tries the breathing exercise she learned from Pat. Happily, it works.

AMY CARTER'S FABULOUS DREAM ADVENTURE It's a crisp fall afternoon in 1980. On the deck of the Presidential yacht, President Jimmy Carter's 12-year-old daughter, AMY CARTER, is having a lovely dream, sailing up and down the Potomac River. Her mother, ROSALYN CARTER quietly reads a book while BETTY FORD, the wife of former President Gerald Ford, is dancing and drinking Billy Beer. Amy's personal hero, SUSAN FORD, complete with Nikon and cool sunglasses, is a reluctant shipmate. Susan's mother embarrasses her and Amy's hero worship is aggravating. Susan isn't having any of it and decides to make the best of a bad situation by toying with the little girl. Betty confides to Rosalynn that Susan hasn't adjusted well to life after the White House. Amy tries to cheer Susan up by pointing out all the fun things they can do in her dream and suggests they go to Puerto Rico, but Susan has other ideas. Against Rosalynn's strong objections, Susan convinces Amy to save her father's Presidency by disguising herself as a dancing harem girl and freeing the American hostages in Iran. Susan warns that if the hostages aren't freed, Amy will be booted out of the White House and will have to leave behind her cat, Misty Malarky Ying Yang. Terrified of this scenario, Amy decides to go along with Susan's plan. While Rosalynn tries to talk her daughter out of this foolhardy and dangerous adventure, Susan extols the beauty and virtues of exotic Iran. Once they've put on their disguises and arrive in the war torn Middle East, Susan tells Amy to wait on the boat while she and Betty go and scout out the situation. Susan assures Amy that in case of a rebel attack she can defend herself with her Barbie doll, which has the power to destroy any enemy. If all goes well, Amy will be a hero, saving her father's Presidency. As soon as Susan and Betty leave the yacht, gunfire and screams are heard. Rosalynn comforts a frightened Amy, telling her she doesn't have to be a hero; in fact, she might enjoy a normal life, far from the prying eyes of the press and public. Amy isn't convinced and is about to go after Susan and Betty when Betty stumbles on, her legs shot up and bleeding. Having lost Susan in the confusion of the battlefield, Betty gamely tries to keep dancing, but dies. Amy runs to rescue Susan but an Iranian Revolutionary grabs her, holding her hostage at gunpoint. Rosalynn turns on the Revolutionary with all the fury of a mother lion but is ultimately shot and killed. Amy angrily confronts the killer and discovers to her horror that her enemy is Susan in disguise. Susan now reveals her devious plot: she'd planned to kill everyone else on the boat so that she, alone with her father, Gerald Ford, could move triumphantly back into the White House. Amy, at gunpoint, pleads for her life while sneakily retrieving her Barbie. She turns the doll on Susan. Lethal laser beams shoot from the doll's vagina, killing Susan. Alone on the deck of the yacht, surrounded by dead bodies, Amy regrets her dream. Suddenly and miraculously, Rosalynn, Betty, and Susan all come back to life. Betty forgives Susan for killing her and Susan asks that her mother no longer embarrass her. Rosalynn and Amy agree that a normal life won't be such a bad thing. Happily reconciled, the shipmates decide that before Amy wakes up and they all go back to their real lives, a trip to Puerto Rico would be just the thing to end this fabulous dream adventure.

PATTI BY THE POOL It's 1986 and NANCY REAGAN is relaxing poolside at Betsy Bloomington's Holmby Hills home, a few days before the Thanksgiving weekend. Her estranged daughter, PATTI DAVIS, whose denim shorts and t-shirt sharply contrast with Nancy's elegant red swimsuit and robe,

has joined her. It's the first time Nancy and her daughter have seen or spoken to each other since the release of Patti's novel, a "fictional" story of the life of the daughter of a conservative governor of California. Though the Reagan family was mortified by the contents of Patti's book, Nancy insists that she hasn't read it and makes it clear that she doesn't want to engage in further conflict with her daughter. But Patti works hard to get a rise out of Nancy, first by mocking her clothes and hair, then by telling Nancy that her horoscope says that she's going to marry a black man. ANITA CASTILLO, Nancy's longtime Paraguayan maid, enters and brings Nancy a cool drink, and ignores Patti's demand for a Jack and Coke. When the maid exits, Patti muses aloud about Anita's indictment for smuggling over a 100,000 rounds of ammunition to Paraguayan rebels, and about how Nancy got the charges dropped and kept Anita on. Patti continues to torment her mother with the possible fallout over the brewing Iran-Contra scandal—which involves the exchange of arms for hostages in Iran. Nancy refuses to take the bait, and even invites Patti to Thanksgiving at the family's ranch, an offer Patti rebuffs. Nancy asks Patti to put the past behind her and lay all the recriminations aside, which only infuriates Patti more. Nancy keeps trying; she acknowledges how hard life has been on her children, with parents so busy in Hollywood, then later, in politics. Nancy finally breaks through by telling her that she's proud of Patti's talent as a writer and that she and Ronnie need her now, more than ever. Moved by her mother's acknowledgement of her writing talent, Patti accepts Nancy's invitation to Thanksgiving at the ranch. There's a moment of peace between the two women. Then Patti asks what her father is going to do about the Iran-Contra situation. Nancy won't discuss it, except to insist that the President knew nothing about anything. Patti, no stranger to politics, finds this hard to believe. It dawns on Patti that the only reason her mother reached out to her was to ensure Patti's silence with regard to this recent scandal. Realizing she's been manipulated, Patti begins to lash out at Nancy just as Anita enters to announce that the President's former Chief of Staff, Jim Baker, is on the phone. As Patti listens to her mother manipulate and cajole Baker into firing other members of the Administration, Anita brings a Jack and Coke to Patti The phone call finished, Nancy turns her attention back to her daughter, who has gulped down her drink. Patti explodes in a torrent of rage, recalling how Nancy used to slap her as a child for the smallest of mistakes. Suddenly, Patti is overcome by convulsions and passes out on her pool chair. Anita reenters and checks her pulse; she'd laced the drink with a heavy narcotic that will keep Patti out for a few days, enough time for Nancy to deal with the Iran-Contra issue and enjoy a peaceful Thanksgiving with "My Ronnie." Anita lights up a joint. Nancy remembers the fun times she and Ronnie and their friends have had at Betsy's beautiful home. Regarding the unconscious Patti, Nancy wonders if her inspiration for the Just Say No campaign, "If you can save one child, then it's worth it" applies to her daughter. Anita shrugs, puffs on her joint, and sings a pretty, but sad folk song about a mother who can't please her difficult child, as the sun shines and the pool twinkles.

IN THE DEEP BOSOM OF THE OCEAN BURIED

October 11th, 2003. It's early morning and BARBARA (BAR) BUSH is standing by the shore at the family's Kennebunkport compound gazing out at the freezing Atlantic Ocean. Today is the 50th anniversary of the death of her 3-year-old toddler Robin from childhood leukemia. From the waters, the spirit of ROBIN BUSH appears, as she does each year on this day to visit with her heartbroken mother. Bar, as she always does on these annual visits, updates her daughter on their family, this time focusing on her disappointingly mediocre eldest son, George W., now about to campaign for his second term as President. They're interrupted by Bar's daughter-in-law, LAURA BUSH, who comes from inside the house to remind Bar of her campaign schedule for the day. Bar is resolved to remain at the shore with her lost daughter, and tells Laura to let everyone know she's not going anywhere. Alone with her little girl, Bar rails against the ineffectiveness of her son's Presidency and what she declares to be the ruination of her husband's legacy. Robin asks her mother, "Remember me to me," and Bar does, recalling the sweet, beautiful child Robin had been and the cruel disease that took her away. Laura returns to plead for Bar to come inside and once more, Bar refuses. Laura reminds her mother-in-law that George needs her support, the campaign has been tough, and the press hasn't been kind. Bar doesn't want to hear what the press and pundits are saying; her "beautiful mind" cannot be bothered and she prefers to keep it that way. Laura leaves, frustrated with Bar's inability to support her own son. Robin and Bar play a favorite question and answer game that leads to Robin wondering what makes the mysterious depths of the ocean so compelling. Laura returns, resolute and with an order from the President. Though Bar tells her to go, Laura is determined not to give up until Bar agrees to go inside, much to the consternation of Robin. Laura takes Robin's place sitting beside Bar and the two First Ladies contemplate being lost, all alone, in the vastness of the ocean before them. They each respond to the idea very differently: Laura, feeling like she could just let go and let the tide carry her where it might, and Bar, vowing to fight to the death. In an awkward moment of honesty Bar reveals her contempt for her son to his wife. This unleashes a fury in Laura who pointedly and angrily confronts her mother-in-law; blaming Bar's neglectful parenting for George's weaknesses; leaving him alone to deal with the grief of losing his sister, ignoring him for much of his life, criticizing him and withholding love. Bar responds to Laura's tirade with one of her own, relating the heartbreaking story of the death of her little girl and wondering aloud about how she and her husband dealt with Robin's death and how it might have affected their son. In this moment of vulnerability Bar considers the possibility of letting go of the pain she's held onto for 50 years, and she asks Laura what letting go feels like. Laura explains the feeling of bliss she's found in not struggling against the often overwhelming circumstances that make up her life with her husband; that letting go of expectations, of selfishness, of fear itself has become for her a way to survive. Bar says goodbye to Robin, who vanishes back into the ocean. Their favorite question-answer song is reprised by all the First Ladies and First Daughters, who emerge from the shadows and sing to Bar, who turns from the cold, mysterious ocean to join her son's campaign and face whatever may come next.

Synopsis by Kirsten Sanderson and Michael John LaChiusa

ALBUM CREDITS

Album Produced by
JOEL MOSS, **MICHAEL JOHN LaCHIUSA** and **KURT DEUTSCH**

Recorded, Edited and Mixed by **JOEL MOSS**
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FIRST DAUGHTER SUITE opened at The Public Theater, New York City, on October 21, 2015.

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Theresa McCarthy and Mary Testa

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